

SOUTH MOLTON
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report

OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
AND THE
Sanitary Inspector
FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1947.

F. J. H. MARTIN,
M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Lond.), D.P.H.(Oxon),
Medical Officer of Health.

113, East Street,

South Molton,

June, 1948.

To the Chairman and Members of the
South Molton Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Council.

I have the honour to present the Annual Report
on the Health and Sanitary Administration of your
District for the year 1947.

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S.(Eng.). L.R.C.P.(Lond.), D.P.H.(Oxon),

Medical Officer of Health.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

For the year ended December 31st, 1947.

LIST OF STAFF.

The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of:—

Part-time Officers:—

F. J. H. MARTIN,
M.R.C.S.(Eng.), L.R.C.P.(Lond.), D.P.H.(Oxon),
Medical Officer of Health.

H. J. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

Whole-time Officers:—

A. G. OXLAND, L.R.I.B., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Inspector.
L. W. EVES, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Additional Sanitary Inspector

Statistics and Social Conditions of Area.

Area in acres	117,432
Population (Registrar General's Figures)	8,564
Inhabited Houses	2,837
Rateable Value	£28,693
Sum represented by a penny rate	£120

Vital Statistics.

	Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate ...	67	68	135
Illegitimate ...	2	3	5
Birth rate per 1,000 population -	16·3		140

	Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate ...	4	1	5
Illegitimate...	0	0	0
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births -	16·9		5

	Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	59	52	111
Death rate per 1,000 population -	12·9		

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal Sepsis	0
Other Puerperal Causes	0

I append a Table showing the comparative figures for South Molton Rural District and England and Wales:—

Rate per 1,000 population			Death Rate per 1,000.	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
South Molton R.D. ...	16·3	·58	12·9	14·2	0
England and Wales ...	20·5	·50	12·0	41·0	5·5

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	1	0	1
Illegitimate	1	0	1
			2
Rate per 1,000 live births - - - -	-	14.2	14.2
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 live births -	-	7.4	7.4

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	0

Causes of Death.

	Males	Females
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1	1
Cancer of Uterus	0	3
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	3
Cancer of all other Sites	7	3
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	8	8
Heart Disease	19	11
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	3	1
Bronchitis	7	2
Pneumonia	1	0
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	0
Appendicitis	1	0
Other Digestive Diseases	1	4
Nephritis	0	4
Premature Birth	2	0
Suicide	0	1
Road Traffic Accident	0	1
Other Violent Causes	3	1
All other Causes	4	9
	59	52
TOTALS	59	52

Cases of Infectious Disease notified in 1947.

(In age groups and excluding Tuberculosis.)

WHOOPING COUGH				MEASLES			
Ages		Males	Females	Ages		Males	Females
Under 1 year	...	—	1	Under 1 year		1	3
1	„	—	—	1	„	3	3
3 years	...	—	—	3 years		5	9
5	„	—	—	5	„	25	7
10	„	1	—	10	„	6	15
15	„	—	—	15	„	4	7
25	„ and over	—	—	25	„ and over	2	2
TOTALS	...	1	1			46	46

Tuberculosis.

NEW CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS NOTIFIED DURING 1947.

MALES		FEMALES	
Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
3	0	2	2
Ages 14, 21, 48		Ages 24, 32	
		Ages 28, 29	

Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

The appended Table shows the number of children immunized during the year in their age groups.

Under 1 year	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	TOTAL
5	28	19	16	5	170	44	287

Five years is now considered the limit for protection after the primary treatment and every effort is made to give all the children a re-inforcement dose every 5 years after the primary treatment so as to protect them during the whole of their school career.

A.P.T. is used for the primary treatment and T.A.F. for the re-inforcement injection.

I should like to thank the Health Visitors for their help and co-operation in this work.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Professional Nursing in the Homes.

There are five District Nurses in the area stationed at Ohulmleigh, Witheridge, Bishop's Nympton, North Molton and Burrington.

Laboratory Facilities.

These are provided by the Devon County Council at Exeter and are of the greatest service to the District and the Medical Profession.

Infectious Diseases.

The Isolation Hospital is at Tiverton.

The V.D. Clinic.

This is held at the North Devon Infirmary (Annex), Barnstaple.

SESSIONS.

<i>Females</i> —Thursdays, 4.45 p.m.	<i>Males</i> —Thursdays, 5.45 p.m.
Fridays, 3.30 p.m.	Fridays, 4.30 p.m.

Ambulance Service.

The South Molton and District Ambulance is manned by the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

I desire thank Mr. Willey and Mr. Oxland for the help they have always so readily given to me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR FOR THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL AREA

For the Year ended 31st December, 1947.

Water.

The introduction of the Regional Scheme promoted by the North Devon Water Board is looked forward to as the solution of the water supply difficulties in this area, as where water is supplied through mains, generally speaking, it is inadequate during times of drought.

The position during the past year in the places where water supply systems exist and particulars of the sources from whence the water is derived are as follows:—

CHULMLEIGH.—The source of the water supply at Chulmleigh is mainly a collecting area, but the water from this source is speedily affected by dry weather. Some years ago a borehole was sunk to augment this supply, but the yield from this has become progressively less and it was necessary during the year under review to restrict the consumption by turning off the water for several hours of the day after dry spells. The water both from the collecting area and the borehole contains iron in solution in considerable quantities and aeration, sedimentation and slow sand filtration is resorted to for removal of this. The raw water has a plumbo solvent action and before being passed into the mains, it is made to flow through a neutralizing chamber, where the p.H. value is raised to a satisfactory degree.

WITHERIDGE.—The supply at Witheridge is derived mainly from an adit into which springs are collected and conveyed to a reservoir. Here again this supply is speedily affected by weather changes and in an effort to augment this supply, a borehole was sunk several years ago, which whilst satisfactory for a time, now yields but very little water. Subsequent to the sinking of this borehole, other springs were collected at Woodford Moor as a temporary measure and a pumping plant is installed to pump the water to the village. No treatment other than that necessary to raise the p.H. value of the water from Woodford Moor is undertaken.

KINGSNYMPTON.—The supply at Kingsnympton is derived from a borehole, the yield from which was originally about four times the estimated consumption. The present yield, however, is insufficient to satisfy the requirements of consumers even on a very restricted basis and this is the case both during the summer and winter months. No treatment of the water is necessary or undertaken. During the year under review the position became so bad that the services of the N.F.S. were brought into use to convey water originally from Bishopsnympton and subsequently South Molton to Kingsnympton, and this continued during the months when most supplies had become normal.

RACKENFORD.—The supply of water at Rackenford, also derived from a borehole, is very meagre in quantity both during the winter and summer months. Here also it was necessary to call in the services of the N.F.S. to transport water, in this case from Tiverton, and this continued to the end of the year. The North Devon Water Board have had the matter under consideration with a view to devising more satisfactory and less expensive means of affording a supply to this village than by conveying it for such a distance.

BISHOPSNYMPTON.—The supply to this Village is derived from a borehole and this in addition to meeting all the demands of consumers, was for a time providing the supply for Kingsnympton. The water contains iron in solution which is taken out by aeration, sedimentation and slow sand filtration.

NORTH MOLTON.—The supply at North Molton is derived from springs on Exmoor and during the dry period of the year we had our first experience of a real shortage at North Molton. Originally the yield from the springs was more than sufficient to meet requirements and as a consequence nothing more than a small tank at the intake was provided. In the early months of the year it was found that whilst the tank may be empty by day, it filled and overflowed during the night. As the year went on, owing to the draw-off emptying the main for a considerable distance, the yield being insufficient to fill the main and the tank during the night, there was a serious shortage, and steps had to be taken to regulate the supply in order that what was available should be distributed as equitably as possible.

The construction of a service reservoir of about six day's supply is in hand, but the work progresses very slowly. No treatment of the water is undertaken.

BRAYFORD.—A scheme for the better utilisation of the water for this village is in hand, and consists of the construction of a hydram house, the provision of a hydram and a service reservoir at high level. This is necessitated as a result of the pipes already laid having become corroded to an extent as to seriously impede the flow, which results in some houses being deprived of water. The head too is restricted and the new arrangement will provide water at a much increased pressure. No treatment of the water is now undertaken nor is contemplated in the new scheme.

GEORGENYMPTON.—The North Devon Water Board have refused to sanction the carrying out of the scheme mentioned in my last Annual Report, owing to the high cost and the fact that little of the works could be embodied in the North Devon Water Scheme.

GENERALLY.—The remainder of the district relies for its supply on small estate schemes and wells.

Eight samples of water were taken during the year from the following:—

One from a river to ascertain the degree of treatment necessary if utilised for a public supply.

One from a new well sunk, which was satisfactory.

Five from existing supplies, four of which were generally satisfactory, but two of the four were plumbo-solvent.

One from a piped supply to ascertain its action on certain metals.

No other samples were taken from piped supplies as there was nothing to indicate any conditions which would reverse previous results. No contamination of any of the piped supplies has arisen necessitating any special action.

Approximately 20% of the houses in the district are supplied direct from public water mains to the houses and 4.2% of the total number of dwellinghouses in the district are supplied by standpipes from public mains. This represents 21 and 4% of the population respectively.

Particulars Of work in connection with water supplies carried out during the year are as follows:—

Number of inspections carried out in connection with private supplies	...	24
Number of visits to and inspections of public water supplies		110
Number of water supplies taken into houses from public mains		10

Drainage and Sewerage.

Apart from sewers laid in connection with housing schemes, no works of sewerage and sewage disposal have been carried out during the year. Eighteen inspections of Sewage Disposal Works have been made and particulars of drainage work carried out during the year are as follows:—

Number of new drains laid	...	...	17
Number of extensions to drains	...	...	4
Number of drains cleared	...	...	8

Schemes of Sewerage and Sewage Disposal are necessary in several places and desirable in others, but in view of the economic position it is likely this important work will have to be deferred for some time longer.

Closet Accommodation.

Number of new closets constructed	...	13
Number of earth closets converted to water closets		12
Number of new closet pans fixed	...	32
Number of new flushing cisterns provided		25

Public Cleansing.

House refuse is collected from the following villages by Contract and deposited in local dumps, viz.:—West Buckland, Chittlehampton, North Molton, Chulmleigh, Witheridge, Bishopsnympton and Georgenympton.

The Council are due to reconsider a collection system for the whole district in July next.

Salvage.

The salvage scheme having proved very expensive to operate in this district, owing to the high cost of collection, the Council gave instructions that activities in this direction should cease, and as a consequence no salvage has been collected this year.

Nuisances.

Three nuisances have come to the Department's notice during the year and they were all dealt with by informal action, abatement having been obtained.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

No premises were found to be infested with bed bugs.

Schools.

No complaints as to schools were made during the year and no matter requiring the intervention of the department was found.

Infectious Diseases.

Disinfection and Disinfestation.

The number of premises disinfected as the result of notifiable diseases, was three, and no case requiring disinfestation was found.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

40 inspections of cowsheds and dairies were made during the year, and in spite of difficulties with the lack of labour and materials, a considerable number of sheds have been re-modelled or otherwise brought up to date.

Slaughterhouses and Meat.

No slaughterhouses in the district are in use.

148 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. of home killed butcher's meat was condemned during the year, the cause of condemnation being bone taint and decomposition.

4 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. of imported butcher's meat was condemned for decomposition.

The following additional foods were condemned :—

Milk	...	...	...	...	17 cans
Beans	...	...	...	...	42 „
Stewed Steak	...	...	...	...	4 „
Carrots	...	...	...	...	4 „
Peas	...	...	...	...	96 „
Beetroot	...	...	...	...	42 „
Pilchards	...	...	...	...	2 „
Macaroni & Cheese	...	...	...	...	1 can
Grapefruit	...	...	...	...	2 cans
Pears	...	...	...	...	1 can
Plums	...	...	...	...	1 „
Bacon	...	...	...	...	1 „
Peaches	...	...	...	...	8 cans
Soup	...	...	...	...	2 „
Jam	...	...	...	...	10 „
Marmalade	...	...	...	...	1 can
Veal Loaf	...	...	...	...	2 cans
Boned Chicken	...	...	...	...	19 „
Kam	...	...	...	...	6 „
Prunes	...	...	...	...	50 lbs.
Fruit Cake	...	...	...	...	24 „
Shredded Wheat	...	...	...	...	23 packets

Bakehouses.

There are twelve bakehouses in the district which are kept in a satisfactory condition and no complaints have been received concerning them.

Factories.

No defects were found in any factories, and the premises of out-workers were satisfactory.

Housing.

34 houses were completed during the year by the Council and 8 by private enterprise.

The following schemes were in course of execution at the end of the year :—

Bishopsnympton 12 houses.

Brayford 8 „

and provision was made for the erection of the following additional houses :—

West Buckland 6 houses.

Chittlehamholt 6 „

The number of visits and inspections to existing houses total 193, and the number of cases where repairs were obtained by informal action is 108.

Two Statutory Notices were served for the execution of works in connection with housing accommodation. One was complied with and the other is outstanding.

Building Licensing.

The operation of Civil Building Control in the exercise of powers delegated to the Council, imposes a big strain on the department as it causes considerable additional work both on the indoor and outdoor staffs. The number of applications received during the year was 325, of which 257 were granted and 68 refused.

A. G. OXLAND, L.R.I.B.A., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Surveyor & Inspector.

